

**Northfield Select Board and Trustee Retreat Meeting Minutes**  
**Northfield Community Room**  
**August 26, 2013**

- Neither manager was present for the retreat. Trustee Maxwell was also absent. Kathleen Lott of the *Northfield News* was the only citizen in attendance.
- Common Project Update –
  - Chair Donahue reported that the project was delayed and, based on timing, no work was likely to begin on either the sidewalk or the north-side paving until next year
  - The RFP has been posted in at least three (3) locations and will be posted for twenty-one (21) days. There are currently two (2) funding sources for the project. One for the sideways and one for the highway portion.
  - A question was asked about whether or not the Trustees had looked into burying utility lines. TDS gave them a price of 52,000 to bury the lines as long as Northfield paid for the materials. The Trustees are not pursuing this any further.
- Communication Between the Boards –
  - Both Boards agreed we should continue with Joint meetings
  - Both Boards commented on how well the Interim Village Manager and the Town Manager were working together.
  - Both Boards agreed that there was value in having the Highway Report added to the Trustees packets and having the Highway Superintendent address the Board on joint meeting nights. There was concern about keeping employees out to late at night to report to the Boards but the majority of the Boards felt it was worthwhile.
  - Reports for the Ambulance, Police, and Fire should also be added to the Trustees packets for informational and awareness purposes.
- Town Manager Form of Government
  - Selectman Denny read a section of state statute on the Town Manager form of government
  - Trustee Beal suggested implementing policy governance into place when the new charter takes effect. The majority of both Boards agreed with that proposal.
- Selectman Goslant indicated that he would like to see the Highway Department consolidated and combined now.

- Community Goals for next year –
  - All group members participated in this conversation and agreed to pursue the following goals for the next nine (9) months. Managers should consider these high priorities.
    - A more friendly and robust website portal that will hopefully make local government more transparent and friendly to do business with. On the new website we would like to see residents be able to view and pay their property taxes online, along with their electric, water and sewer charges.
    - The Boards would like to see Town Reports put online. We would also expect that paper copies be available upon request at the town office. We should find a way to summarize the Town Reports to make them less tedious to navigate but have full detail also available if the resident wishes.
    - The Boards were both open to exploring third-party accounting cloud services.
    - Trustee Beal indicated he would like to explore the possibility of having a third party handle payroll processing as he believes this could be a savings to the Town.
    - Having our Finance Director and possibly finance employees train for certifications and attend national conferences to learn and explore how others are doing things and what may or may not work for us.
    - Northfield Memorial Park needs restoration. Selectman Denny offered to work with the Recreation Committee to look for private funding to restore and make it an attractive place to spend time.
    - Upgrade street lights to new LED bulbs. This has a RIO that is extremely favorable and has a payoff in less than 5 years.
    - Energy audits for buildings should be done. The Boards agreed that our heating and utility costs are very high and could be improved through building efficiencies.
    - Both Boards were in favor of forming a plan to merge the Fire and Ambulance departments into one location on Wall Street.
    - Trustee Beal suggested that the Town investigate Policy Governance and it was agreed that this should be examined and implemented.
- Meeting adjourned – 9:15 p.m.